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THE NATIONAL
MARY WASHINGTON MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION
WASHINGTON, D.C.

To the Women of the United States

THIS APPEAL IS ADDRESSED.

The grave of Mary, the Mother of Washington, lies neglected and desolate; a monument begun there, but never completed, stands blackened and dilapidated. We would rescue from total oblivion the name of a woman whose memory should be hallowed in every American home, and pay a national tribute to her noble motherhood by erecting a monument in her honor.

This is a "woman's movement," says the first circular issued, "national in its character, for raising the needed sum by such small contributions that no woman in the land need be deprived of the privilege of aiding a cause that must appeal to the heart of every mother and daughter in America."

This will be the first monument ever erected by women to a woman. Mary Washington was of a heroic nature, patriotic soul, tender spirit, and uncommon mental gifts. She was the finest type of the brave and devoted women who ruled the households of the Colonies in those days when our freedom trembled in the balance. Do we not stand reproached before the world? Should we not make ample atonement for the neglect under which has lain for long years the memory of the mother of the greatest hero and patriot "that adorns the annals of history?" It is a sad spot, that desolated grave where has rested for a hundred years, amid tangled masses of humble weeds and grass, the noble woman so beloved and revered by her noble son, who proudly declared, "I attribute all my success in life to the moral, intellectual, and physical education which I received from my mother." Should not this touch the hearts of our women and make them cling tenderly to her memory as a proud heritage? A precious memorial will be the monument they shall place above her sacred dust, and consecrated the ground where she reposes.

The women of America should be "heart-moved as by the voice of a trumpet" when this appeal comes to them. To her we are indebted that George Washington became a patriotic American citizen. To her is due that grand character, cast in such heroic mould, that union of gigantic energy, indomitable resolution, and dauntless courage which marked him the first of all his countrymen. It was

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she who kindled noble principles and purposes in his soul. At her side his genius budded and expanded. But for her wisdom and spirit he would have passed his youth upon the deck of a British man-of-war, trained for England's service, and the sword which cleft the way to our victory would have been drawn for our oppressor.*

Women are giving their time and energies to building monuments to men. Their success is phenomenal. But the time has come when there must be commemorated in enduring marble the virtues of a woman, who shall be always to them the paragon of womanly excellence. Nothing is left undone to raise to a higher plane in this and foreign countries the memory of George Washington; but for years this beloved and faithful-hearted mother, whose protest against the plans of others to give him to England made him OURS forever, has but a dilapidated ruin to mark her grave.†

Behind the gleaming marble the artist stands proclaiming his immortal workmanship. What sculptor can point to a work like that of Mary Washington? It was she who moulded into grand symmetrical proportions this character so nearly perfect—it was she who gave him to his country.

WOMEN OF AMERICA, marshal your forces! Begin the work with energies quickened by the thought that she is YOURS!

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* "Colonel Lawrence Washington, of Mount Vernon, with whom his little half-brother, George, was a petted favorite, procured for him in 1746, when he was not quite fourteen years of age, a midshipman's warrant in the British Navy, and the ensuing winter was passed in joyous preparation by young Washington for entering upon his new sphere in life. The following summer he was on the point of departure in a British ship-of-war lying in the Potomac. His luggage was on board, when his mother's carefully considered final decision, kindly but firmly communicated, *forbade his going*—which greatly disappointed her son; but with filial love and ready obedience he acquiesced and returned to his studies."—*Lossing's "Life of Mary Washington."*

† Mary Ball Washington, the daughter of Col. Joseph Ball, of Lancaster, Va., was born 1706; married Augustine Washington, March 6, 1730, and died August 25, 1789, aged 83 years, and was buried on the spot chosen by herself on her own home plantation, "Kenmore," on the Rappahannock, near Fredericksburg.

Forty years after, a patriotic citizen of New York, Mr. Silas E. Burrows, presented a handsome marble monument for the spot, the corner-stone of which was laid by President Andrew Jackson in 1833; that was nearly but not entirely completed, and is now in such a state of dilapidation and ruin as to be irrecoverable.

Augustine Washington [father of George] died 1743, and his body was laid in the family vault in Westmoreland county, Virginia.—*Lossing's "Life of Mary Washington."*

Let every one of her sex, whatever her condition, come with her contribution. She who commands millions, will she not give thousands? She who by arduous daily toil earns a pittance, may she not cheerfully add her mite?

We would not that this monument be built by a few generous men and women alone; we want the pennies of the poor as well as the dollars of the rich. We would have every woman to share in the proud privilege of associating herself by her contribution in the work of erecting an imperishable memorial to that epitome of womanly virtues and graces—MARY, THE MOTHER OF OUR BELOVED WASHINGTON.

This APPEAL comes to you from THE NATIONAL MARY WASHINGTON MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION, chartered February 22, 1890, in the District of Columbia.

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President of the United States (*ex officio*).

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344 DStreet,

A Vice-President to be appointed in each State, whose duty it shall be to organize branch associations in her State, and adopt such measures as she may deem expedient to procure funds for the erection of this monument, and for its future care and preservation; also to secure the largest enrollment of members possible and forward the rolls of names with the sums contributed to the Secretary of the National Association for permanent record.

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Station, Va.,
Sept. 15, 1890.

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